

FORM PTO-1390
(REV. 12-2001)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER

TRANSMITTAL LETTER TO THE UNITED STATES
DESIGNATED/ELECTED OFFICE (DO/EO/US)
CONCERNING A FILING UNDER 35 U.S.C. 371

OT-4607

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (If known, see 37 CFR 1.5)

Not Yet Assigned

10/070712

INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO.

PCT/US00/24408

INTERNATIONAL FILING DATE

6 September 2000

PRIORITY DATE CLAIMED

7 September 1999

TITLE OF INVENTION

STEP FOR ESCALATOR

APPLICANT(S) FOR DO/EO/US

Yoshio Tsukahara, et. al.

Applicant herewith submits to the United States Designated/Elected Office (DO/EO/US) the following items and other information:

1. ☒ This is a **FIRST** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
2. ☐ This is a **SECOND** or **SUBSEQUENT** submission of items concerning a filing under 35 U.S.C. 371.
3. ☒ This is an express request to begin national examination procedures (35 U.S.C. 371(f)). The submission must include items (5), (6), (9) and (21) indicated below.
4. ☒ The US has been elected by the expiration of 19 months from the priority date (Article 31).
5. ☒ A copy of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2))
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☒ has been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☒ is not required, as the application was filed in the United States Receiving Office (RO/US).
6. ☐ An English language translation of the International Application as filed (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(2)).
 - a. ☐ is attached hereto.
 - b. ☐ has been previously submitted under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
7. ☐ Amendments to the claims of the International Application under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(3))
 - a. ☐ are attached hereto (required only if not communicated by the International Bureau).
 - b. ☐ have been communicated by the International Bureau.
 - c. ☐ have not been made; however, the time limit for making such amendments has NOT expired.
 - d. ☐ have not been made and will not be made.
8. ☐ An English language translation of the amendments to the claims under PCT Article 19 (35 U.S.C. 371 (c)(3)).
9. ☒ An oath or declaration of the inventor(s) (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(4)).
10. ☐ An English language translation of the annexes of the International Preliminary Examination Report under PCT Article 36 (35 U.S.C. 371(c)(5)).

Items 11 to 20 below concern document(s) or information included:

11. ☐ An Information Disclosure Statement under 37 CFR 1.97 and 1.98.
12. ☒ An assignment document for recording. A separate cover sheet in compliance with 37 CFR 3.28 and 3.31 is included.
13. ☒ A FIRST preliminary amendment.
14. ☐ A SECOND or SUBSEQUENT preliminary amendment.
15. ☐ A substitute specification.
16. ☐ A change of power of attorney and/or address letter.
17. ☐ A computer-readable form of the sequence listing in accordance with PCT Rule 13ter.2 and 35 U.S.C. 1.821 - 1.825.
18. ☐ A second copy of the published international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
19. ☐ A second copy of the English language translation of the international application under 35 U.S.C. 154(d)(4).
20. ☒ Other items or information:

Return Receipt Postcard
Associate Power of Attorney
Express Mail Label ET246995905US

U.S. APPLICATION NO. (if known, see 37 CFR 1.53) Not Yet Assigned 10/070712		INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION NO. PCT/US00/24408		ATTORNEY'S DOCKET NUMBER OT-4607			
21. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The following fees are submitted: BASIC NATIONAL FEE (37 CFR 1.492 (a) (1) - (5)): Neither international preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) nor international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO and International Search Report not prepared by the EPO or JPO \$1040.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but International Search Report prepared by the EPO or JPO \$890.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) not paid to USPTO but international search fee (37 CFR 1.445(a)(2)) paid to USPTO \$740.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO but all claims did not satisfy provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$710.00 International preliminary examination fee (37 CFR 1.482) paid to USPTO and all claims satisfied provisions of PCT Article 33(1)-(4) \$100.00 ENTER APPROPRIATE BASIC FEE AMOUNT =				CALCULATIONS PTO USE ONLY <table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">\$ 710.00</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> </table>		\$ 710.00	
\$ 710.00							
Surcharge of \$130.00 for furnishing the oath or declaration later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(e)).				<table border="1" style="width:100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; text-align: right;">\$</td> <td style="width: 50%;"></td> </tr> </table>		\$	
\$							
CLAIMS	NUMBER FILED	NUMBER EXTRA	RATE	\$ 710.00			
Total claims	9 - 20 =	0	x \$18.00	\$			
Independent claims	2 - 3 =	0	x \$84.00	\$			
MULTIPLE DEPENDENT CLAIM(S) (if applicable)			+ \$280.00	\$ 280.00			
TOTAL OF ABOVE CALCULATIONS =				\$			
<input type="checkbox"/> Applicant claims small entity status. See 37 CFR 1.27. The fees indicated above are reduced by 1/2.				+			
SUBTOTAL =				\$ 990.00			
Processing fee of \$130.00 for furnishing the English translation later than <input type="checkbox"/> 20 <input type="checkbox"/> 30 months from the earliest claimed priority date (37 CFR 1.492(f)).				\$			
TOTAL NATIONAL FEE =				\$			
Fee for recording the enclosed assignment (37 CFR 1.21(h)). The assignment must be accompanied by an appropriate cover sheet (37 CFR 3.28, 3.31). \$40.00 per property +				\$ 40.00			
TOTAL FEES ENCLOSED =				\$ 1030.00			
				Amount to be refunded:	\$		
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a. <input type="checkbox"/> A check in the amount of \$ _____ to cover the above fees is enclosed. b. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please charge my Deposit Account No. <u>15-0750</u> in the amount of \$ <u>1030.00</u> to cover the above fees. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. c. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. <u>15-0750</u> . A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed. d. <input type="checkbox"/> Fees are to be charged to a credit card. WARNING: Information on this form may become public. Credit card information should not be included on this form. Provide credit card information and authorization on PTO-2038.							
NOTE: Where an appropriate time limit under 37 CFR 1.494 or 1.495 has not been met, a petition to revive (37 CFR 1.137 (a) or (b)) must be filed and granted to restore the application to pending status. SEND ALL CORRESPONDENCE TO: Sean W. O'Brien Intellectual Property Dept. Otis Elevator Company Ten Farm Springs Farmington, CT 06032							
				 SIGNATURE Sean W. O'Brien NAME 37,689 REGISTRATION NUMBER			

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re application of: : Docket: OT-4607
Yoshio Tsukahara, et al. : Date: March 4, 2002
Appln. No.: Not Yet Assigned : Group Art Unit: Not Yet Assigned
Nat'l Phase of PCT/US00/24408 :
Filing Date: Concurrently Herewith : Examiner: Not Yet Assigned
Title: STEP FOR ESCALATOR

Commissioner for Patents
Washington, D.C. 20231

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Dear Sir:

Prior to examination, please amend the above-identified application as follows:

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 5 and 6, without prejudice to or disclaimer of subject matter, to read as follows:

5. (Amended) The escalator step according to Claim 2 or 3, wherein the height of the cleats of the non-slip surface are formed to be higher than the tread.

6. (Amended) The escalator step according to Claim 2 or 3, wherein the non-slip surface is fastened to a reinforcing plate which is fixed within a cleat cutout part of the step.

REMARKS

The foregoing amendments are submitted to correct improper multiple-dependency.
Favorable consideration is requested.

Please charge any fee for this preliminary amendment to Deposit Account No. 15-0750, Order No. OT-4607.

Respectfully submitted,

YOSHIO TSUKAHARA, ET AL.



Sean W. O'Brien

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10/070712

10/070712 05 MAR 2002

Nat'l Phase of PCT/US00/24408
Appendix to Prelim. Amd.

Version Showing
Claim Amendments

5. (Amended) The escalator step according to Claims ~~2-4~~ 2 or 3, wherein the height of the cleats of the non-slip surface are formed to be higher than the tread.

6. (Amended) The escalator step according to Claims ~~2-5~~ 2 or 3, wherein the non-slip surface is fastened to a reinforcing plate which is fixed within a cleat cutout part of the step.

10/070712 05 MAR 2002

STEP FOR ESCALATOR

Technical field of the Invention

5 This invention relates to an escalator step and, in particular, to a step structure that improves safety.

Background of the Invention

10 A step for an escalator is comprised of a horizontal step and a riser which hangs downward from the rear edge thereof and has a curved surface. It is typical to have a non-slip function provided to the step by forming a tread made of cleats and of a toothed surface formed on the riser made of cleats, with the pitch of the riser cleats being twice that of the step tread. It has been effective to form the toothed surface of cleats, which engage with the step tread, to the riser in order to minimize the danger of articles falling between steps, and the danger of rubber shoes, etc. being dragged between steps having a smooth surface. Therefore, this has been applied in most risers of steps for escalators in recent years.

15 However, there are still cases of shoes being pulled between steps due to the rubber part of the shoes sliding and contacting the toothed surface of the riser. Therefore, it is desirable to improve this in order to maintain safety on an escalator. Also, the rear edge of a step formed with a tread can cause the tip of a shoe to slip and there is a danger of loss of footing.

20 Japanese Kokai Patent Application Number Hei 1[1989]-285581 discloses a solution of applying a surface finishing process to the surface of a riser by using a fluorine resin. Fluorine resin is expensive and causes an increase in the cost of manufacturing a step for an escalator due to the process for coating the fluorine resin. There were additional problems, however, such as lack of durability due to the fluorine resin tending to wear out easily. The work of disassembling the entire escalator and removing steps to be repaired become necessary in order to repaint worn fluorine resin. This results in a lack of availability of the escalator during this time and an associated increase in maintenance cost.

Summary of the Invention

This invention was achieved by considering the aforementioned situation and improves the step for an escalator by providing a non-slip function to the rear edge of the step, along with improving the riser in order to minimize the risk of drag-in between steps.

5 In order to solve the aforementioned problems, this invention provides a step for an escalator having a toothed surface made of cleats and a riser which hangs downward with a curved surface from the rear edge of a horizontal step, with one or more grooves formed in the longitudinal direction of the riser cleats.

10 Therefore, the smooth surface of a riser cleat is eliminated due to grooves being provided to each cleat forming the toothed surface of the riser, and the danger of dragging in of rubber shoes can be minimized or prevented.

Also, a step for an escalator is provided with a riser having a curved surface which hangs downward from the rear edge of a horizontal step, and a non-slip surface of a prescribed width and a fixed length mounted detachably at the rear edge of the step.

15 Therefore, danger of shoes slipping inadvertently can be prevented since a non-slip function is provided to the rear edge of the step.

20 In a particular embodiment, the non-slip surface is composed of a synthetic resin body of a fixed length and approximately the same width as a prescribed demarcation width to be applied at the periphery of the step and is a material of greater frictional resistance than metal. Also, a serrated irregular part is formed on the top surface of the cleats of the non-slip surface. Furthermore, the height of the cleats of the non-slip surface is formed to be higher than the tread. Furthermore, the non-slip surface can be fastened with screws to a reinforcing plate, which is fixed within the cleat cutout part of the step.

Brief Description of the Drawings

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the step for an escalator related to this invention.

Figure 2 is an enlarged view within circle A in Figure 1.

Figure 3(A) is a partially sectioned perspective view of the riser shown in Figure 1
5 and (B) is a partial top view thereof.

Figure 4(A) is a partially sectioned perspective view in another example of the riser
shown in Figure 1 and (B) is a partial top view thereof.

Figure 5(A) is a partially sectioned perspective view in yet another example of the
riser shown in Figure 1 and (B) is a partial top view thereof.

10 Figure 6(A) is a partially sectioned perspective view in yet another example of the
riser shown in Figure 1 and (B) is a partial top view thereof.

Figure 7 is a disassembled perspective view of a non-slip member.

Figure 8 is a schematic perspective view for an assembling example of a non-slip
member.

15 Figure 9 is a schematic perspective view for another assembling example of a
non-slip member.

Best Mode for Carrying Out the Invention

Below, embodiments of this invention will be explained by referring to the appended
20 figures. Escalator step (1) shown in Figure 1 and Figure 2 has step (2) which maintains a
horizontal surface and riser (3) which hangs downward in a curved shape from the rear edge
of step (2). tread (4) comprised of plural cleats (4a) is formed on the top surface of step (2)
along with toothed surface (5) composed of plural cleats (5a) having a pitch twice that of
tread (4) being formed to the surface of riser (3). Along with grooves (6) being formed on
25 each cleat (5a) which forms toothed surface (5), non-slip surface (7) is mounted to be
detachable at the rear edge of escalator step (1) at which tread (4) and toothed surface (5)
meet.

Grooves (6) are 2-3 grooves which are formed in the longitudinal direction on the
surface of each cleat (5a) comprising toothed surface (5) as shown in Figure 3-Figure 6. The

examples shown in Figure 3 and Figure 4 show cases when riser (3) is composed of a thick plate of die cast aluminum, etc. and the examples in Figure 5 and Figure 6 shows cases when riser (3) is composed of a thin stainless steel plate, etc. With regard to grooves (6), two are formed parallel along cleat (5a) in Figure 3 and Figure 5 or three are formed parallel along cleat (5a) in Figure 4 and Figure 6. The preferred dimensions for each part shown in Figure 3(B)-Figure 6(B) are noted in detail in the item of the application example.

Grooves (6) are formed simultaneous with the die casting or pressing. Or, naturally, it is possible to form grooves (6) to cleat (5a) by machining after the formation of riser (3) by die casting. Also, the number of strip grooves (6) in each cleat (5a) is not restricted to that shown in the figures. Namely, all that is necessary is to make the area of the surface that the rubber shoes contacts in addition to the two die surfaces of each strip bump (5a) as small as possible and not to deform the rubber portion of the shoe when contact is made.

Also, non-slip surface (7) is a synthetic resin molded body which is a material having a greater frictional resistance than metal and has fixed length (L) and approximately the same width (W) as the demarcation width, with the exception of one portion (2-3 cleat bumps (4a)) of tread (4) applied with marking consisting of a yellow indicator for indicating the lateral boundary of the step at the periphery of step (2) as shown in Figure 7. Therefore, if the synthetic resin molded body is formed with a yellow material, it can replace a demarcation at the rear edge of the step.

Along with alternately forming cleats (7a) of slightly higher height and the same pitch interval as tread (4) and cleats (7b) of the same pitch interval as cleats (5a) and adjacent to cleats (7a) to this synthetic resin molded body, serrated irregular part (7c) is formed to the top surface of strip bumps (7a) and (7b) as indicated within the circle in the figure. Cleats (7a) and (7b) can be formed to be slightly higher than cleats (4a) so that the tips of shoes become caught.

In order to mount this non-slip surface (7) to escalator step (1), screw holes (8, 8) are perforated between cleats (7a) and (7b) at the top surface of non-slip surface (7) and cleat cutout part (11) is formed to the rear edge of step (2). It is preferably, if possible, to provide

screw holes (12a, 12a), which conform with the screw holes of non-slip member (7) to cleat cutout part (11).

If not possible, reinforcing plate (12) is provided to cleat cutout part (11) as shown in simplified Figures 8(A) and (B). This reinforcing plate (12) is formed by horizontal part (12b) with screw holes (12a) and (12a) which conform with screw holes (8) and (8) perforated in non-slip surface (7) at the end part of curved surface part (12c). The plate (12) is suitably fixed so that curved surface part (12c) contacts the inside surface of riser (3), and the top surface of horizontal part (12b) is maintained at approximately the same height as the top end surface on the riser (3) of cleat cutout part (11). Therefore, joining to reinforcing plate (12) is done by fitting non-slip surface (7) into cleat cutout part (11) and engaging fasteners (13) and (13) into screw holes (8) and (8).

Alternatively, as shown in similarly simplified Figures 9(A) and (B), slanted reinforcing plate (14) which links the inside surfaces of riser (3) and step (2) is coupled to the inside part of cleat cutout part (11) by welding, etc. Contact surface (9) is formed by cutting a bottom angular part on the step (2) side of non-slip surface (7) so as to be parallel to the slanted angle of reinforcing plate (14). Screw holes (8) and (8) are perforated at a slant so as to be orthogonal to reinforcing plate (14) fasteners (13) are engaged into screw holes (8) and (8) at a slant, and non-slip surface (7) and reinforcing plate (14) are joined.

Other alternatives include forming an extension on the non-slip surface 7. Instead of using fasteners at the bottom part of non-slip surface (7), the extension can be inserted into hole (12a) and fixed by fastening with a ring, etc. on the back side of step (2). Another alternative includes an extension that expands after press fitting and inserting it into hole (12a). In these cases, there is a disadvantage of needing to disassemble the entire escalator during maintenance such as when replacing non-slip surface (7), as opposed to the configuration using screw fastening, in which maintenance such as replacement of the non-slip surface is possible without disassembling the entire escalator.

Non-slip member (7) can be conformed in length by fabricating a fixed, prescribed length member, fixing this to cleat cutout part (11) as an extension, and suitably cutting if the length thereof [of cleat cutout part] is insufficient.

Suggested dimensions in Figure 3(B), Figure 4(B), Figure 5(B), and Figure 6(B) are about (a) 6.00 mm, (b) 1.00 mm, (c) 1.50 mm, (d) 2.50 mm, (e) 6.00 mm, (f) 7.00 mm, (g) 1.00 mm, (h) 3.00 mm, and (i) 0.3 mm. Also, if groove (6) has two grooves, the curvature radius at the awl part of the waveform in strip bump (5a) is 0.05 mm and if groove (6) has three grooves, the curvature radius of the awl part of the waveform in strip bump (5a) is 0.03 mm.

According to this invention as explained above, one or more grooves are provided to the surface of each cleat forming the toothed surface of the riser so that even if rubber shoes, etc. contact the cleat, the grooves do not cause adhesion by creating a pneumatic layer, and thus the danger of dragging in shoes, etc. between steps is minimized or eliminated, and a significant decrease in maintenance cost results compared to repainting the step with fluorine resin. Furthermore, a non-slip surface is provided to the rear edge of the step so that danger of shoes slipping at the rear edge of the step can be prevented.

Also, the non-slip surface is formed with a synthetic resin plate of a fixed length and the same width as a prescribed demarcation width, so naturally, in addition to being able to be manufactured inexpensively with a synthetic resin and functioning also as a demarcation, an effective non-slip function is manifested due to the synthetic resin material having greater frictional resistance than a metal.

Also, the cleat in the non-slip member is made slightly higher than the height of the tread so that shoe tips may be engaged. Also, an irregular part is formed at the top surface to create a more effective non-slip function.

Furthermore, the non-slip surface is configured to be attachable and detachable to the cleat cutout part of the step, so if one portion of the non-slip member breaks off, this part can be replaced immediately and a great decrease in maintenance cost can be made compared to replacing the entire step.

What is Claimed:

1. An escalator step including a tread and a riser, the riser extending downward from a rear edge of the step, the riser including a toothed surface made of cleats with one or more grooves formed in the longitudinal direction on the surface of each of the cleats.

2. An escalator step including a tread and a riser, the riser extending downward from a rear edge of the step, the step including a non-slip surface of a fixed length and a prescribed width mounted to the rear edge of the step.

3. An escalator step according to Claim 2, wherein the non-slip surface is comprised of a synthetic resin body of a fixed length and approximately the same width as a prescribed demarcation width to be applied at the periphery of the step and is formed with cleats conforming to the step tread.

4. The escalator step according to Claim 2 or 3, further including a serrated irregular part formed on the top surface of the cleats of the non-slip surface.

5. The escalator step according to Claims 2-4, wherein the height of the cleats of the non-slip surface are formed to be higher than the tread.

6. The escalator step according to Claims 2-5, wherein the non-slip surface is fastened to a reinforcing plate which is fixed within a cleat cutout part of the step.

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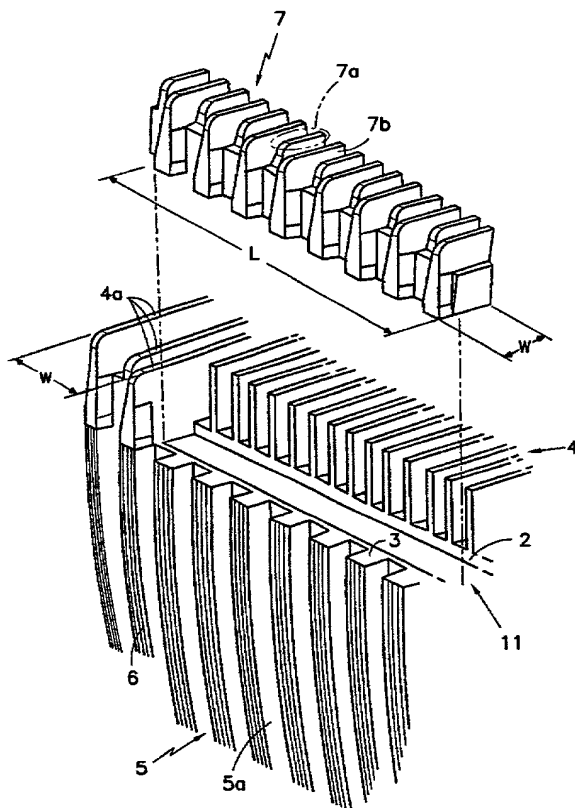
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[Continued on next page]

(54) Title: STEP FOR ESCALATOR



(57) Abstract: An escalator step riser is improved by adding grooves to the cleat surfaces, and, at the same time, a skid-inhibiting function is realized at the rear edge of the step. For escalator step (1), cleats (5a) are formed with a pitch twice that of tread (4) on riser (3). On each cleat (5a) of the riser (3), one or more grooves (6) are formed in the longitudinal direction. In addition, skid-inhibiting surface (7), made of a synthetic resin and having a prescribed width, is attached in a quick connecting/disconnecting manner on the rear edge of step (2). A serrated irregular portion (7c) is formed on the upper surface of cleats (7a), (7b) of the non-slip surface (7).

WO 01/17888 A1

[illegible]

FIG.1

1/5

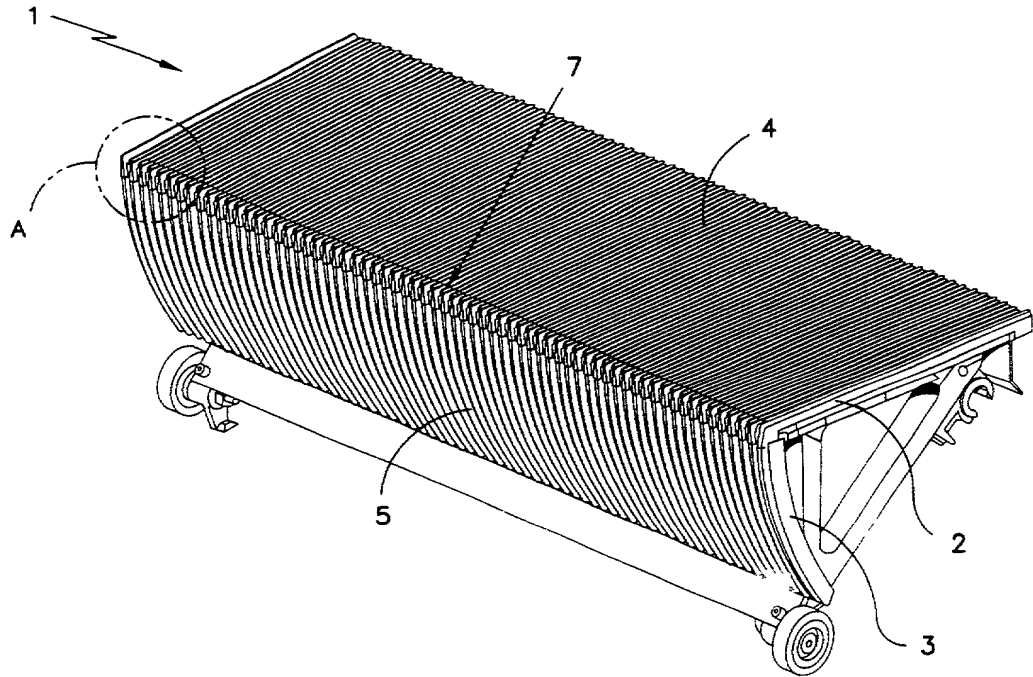
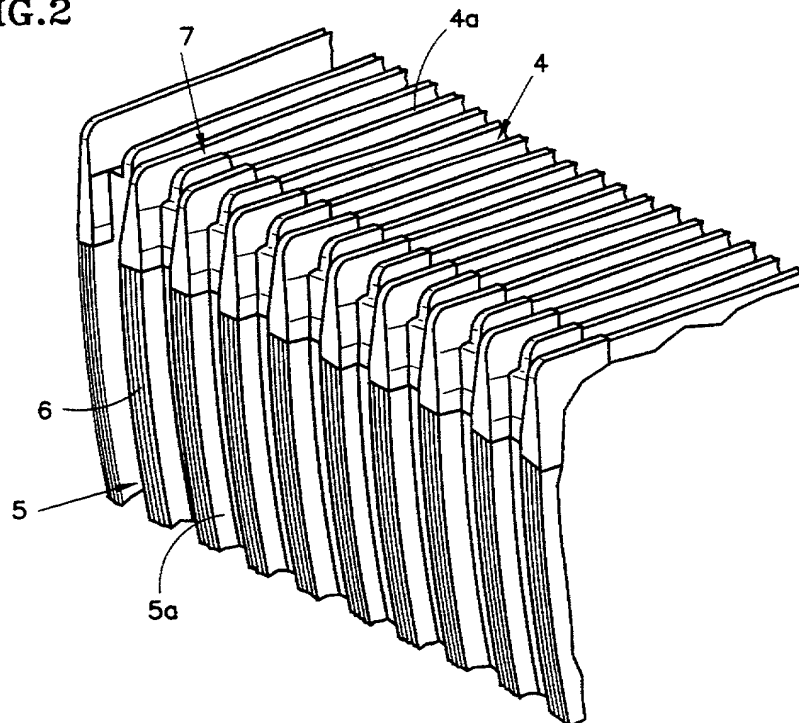


FIG.2



2/5

FIG.3A

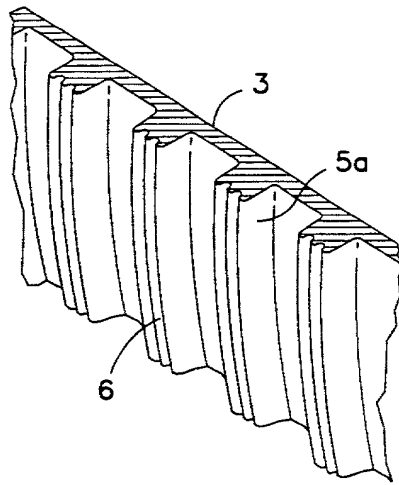


FIG.3B

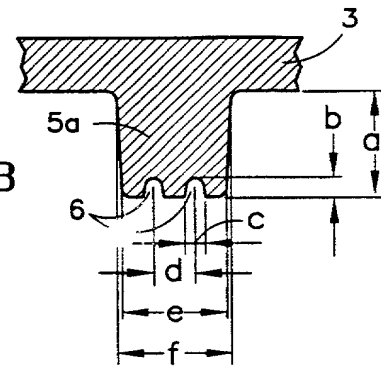


FIG.4A

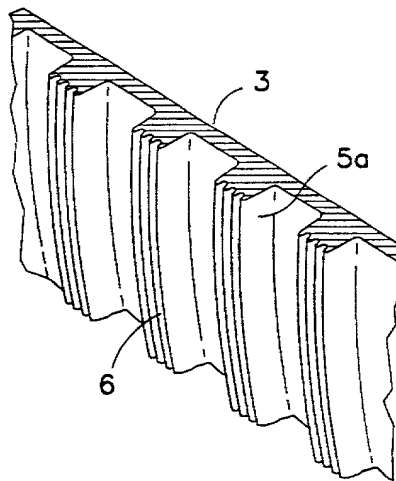
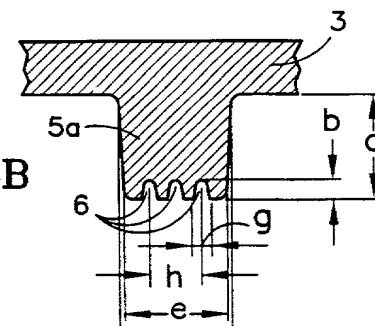


FIG.4B



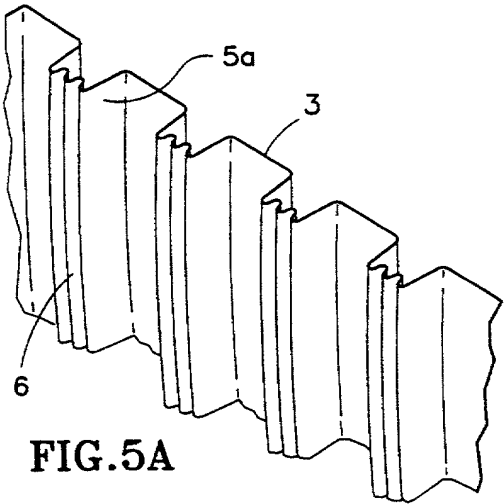


FIG. 5A

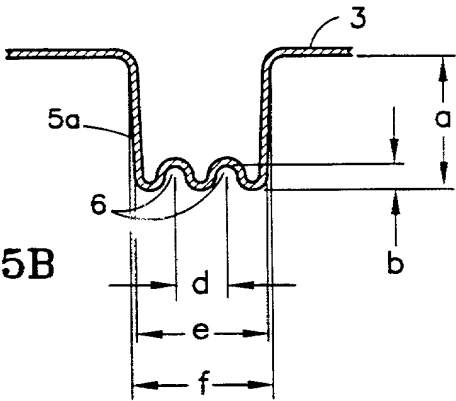


FIG. 5B

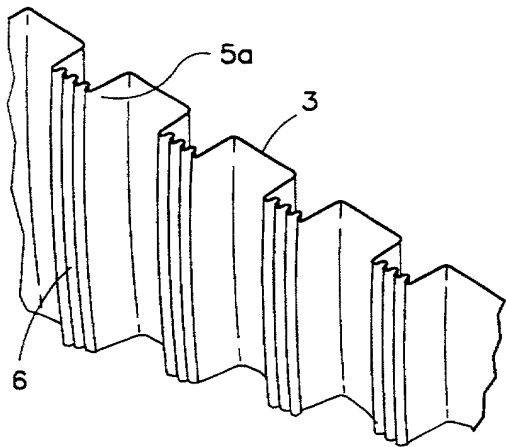


FIG. 6A

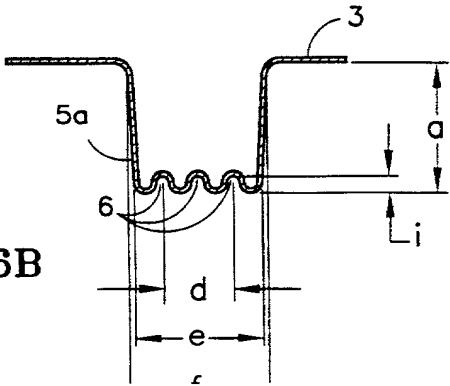


FIG. 6B

4/5

FIG.7

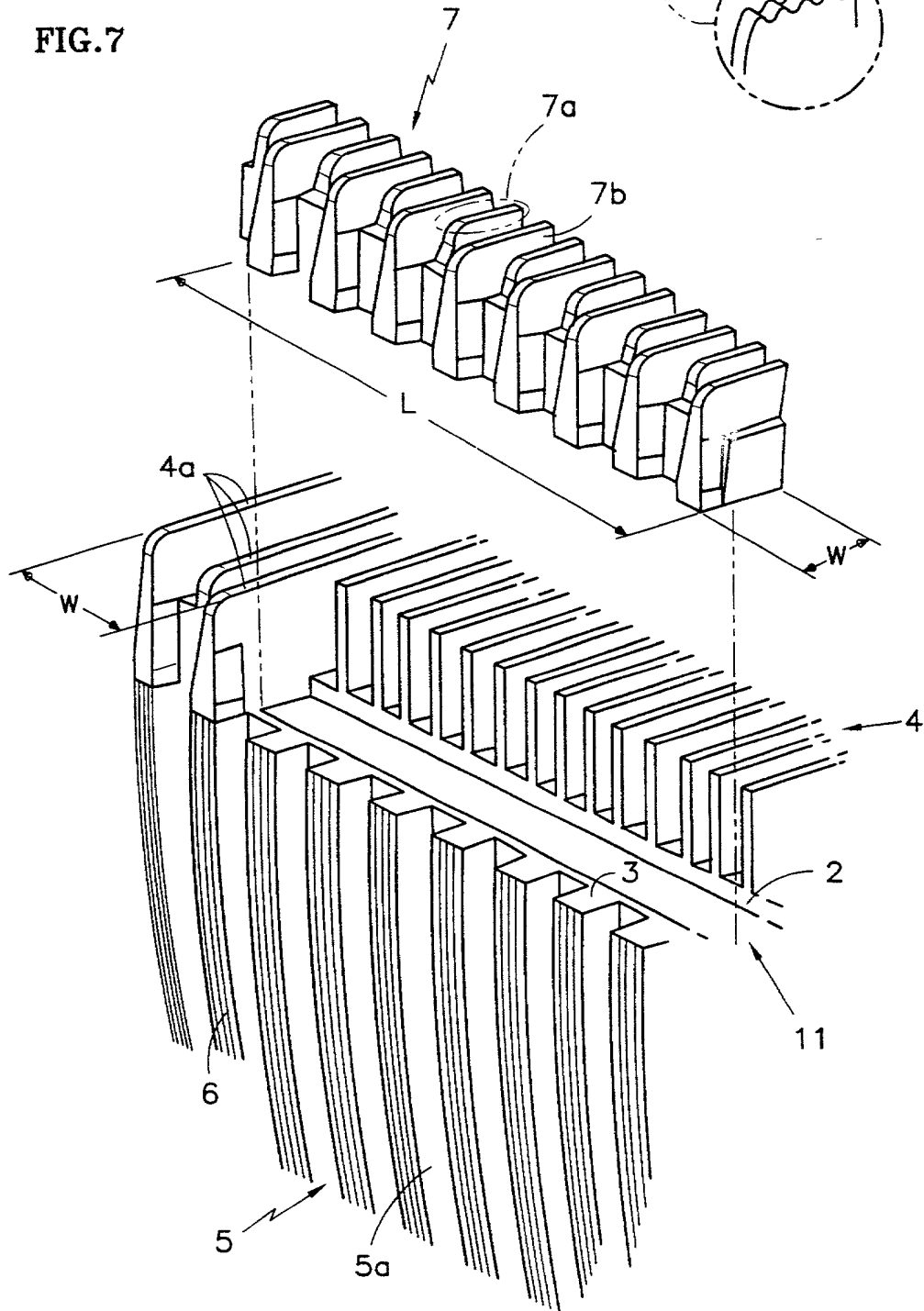


FIG.7A

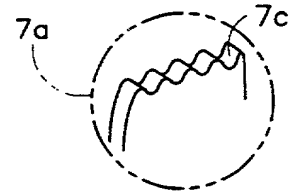


FIG.8A

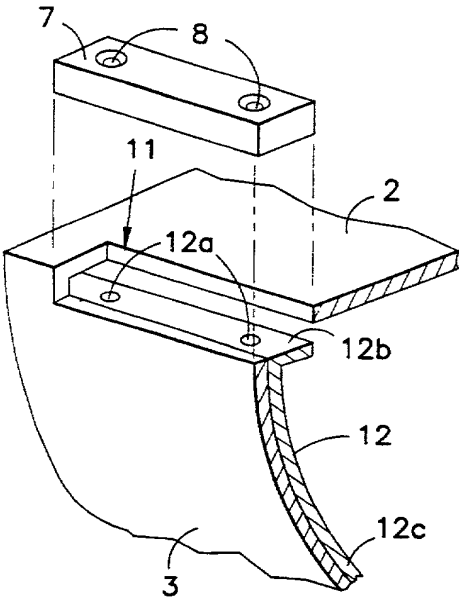


FIG.9A

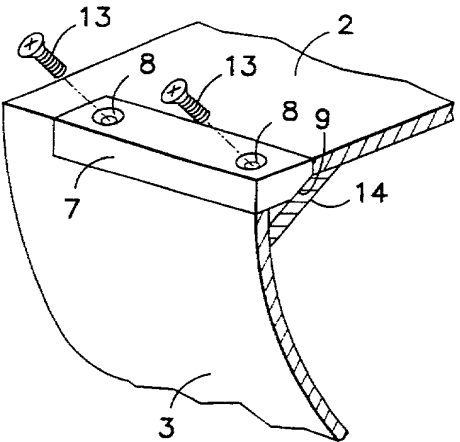
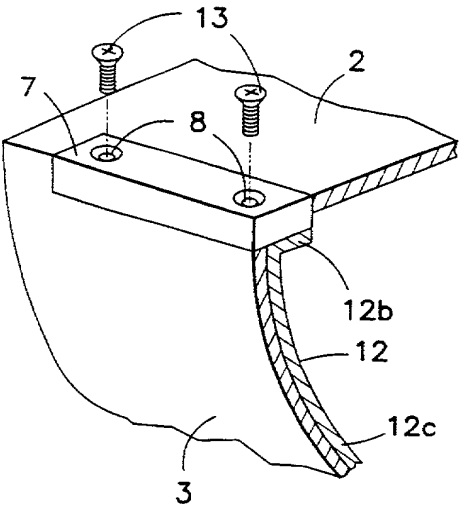
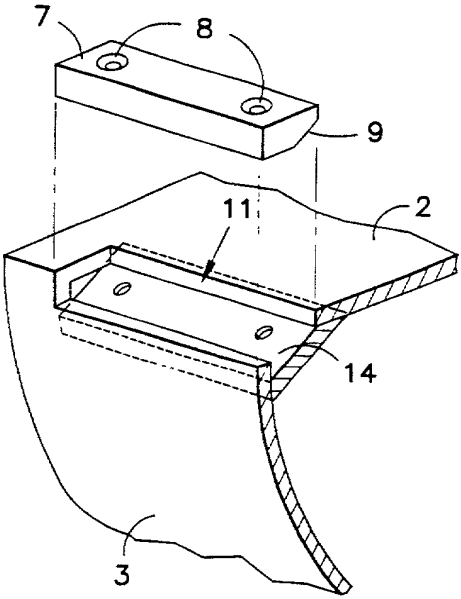


FIG.8B

FIG.9B

COMBINED DECLARATION AND POWER OF
ATTORNEY IN ORIGINAL APPLICATIONDOCKET NO.
OT- 4607

I declare: that my residence and citizenship is as stated below next to my name; that I believe I am the original, first and sole inventor (if only I am named below) or joint inventor (if plural inventors are named below) of the subject matter for which priority is claimed under a patent application filed in Japan under Application No. 11-252446 dated September 7, 1999 and identified as Attorney Docket No. OT-4607, and for which a patent is sought in the specification entitled

STEP FOR ESCALATOR

That I have reviewed and understand the contents of the above-identified specification, including the claims; that I acknowledge the duty to disclose to the Patent and Trademark Office all information known to me to be material to patentability as defined in 37 C.F.R. §1.56; that all statements made herein of my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issuing thereon.

I appoint the following attorney(s) and/or agent(s) to prosecute this application and to transact all business in the Patent and Trademark Office connected therewith:

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